

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Kikushima, et al, JP10-163440.

Claim 1 and 4 have been amended to incorporate a portion of claims 3 and 7, respectively.

The subject matter regarding the second electrical conductor formed within the first trench added to claim 1 is not described in Kikushima et al. This matter makes it clear that the second electrical conductor itself works as one of a pair of local interconnects.

In contrast, the electrical conductors 14, 15 formed within a trench in Kikushima et al. constitute a plug. This plug itself does not work as one of a pair of local interconnects.

The subject matter added to claim 4 makes it clear that the inlaid interconnection itself works as one of a pair of local interconnects. This matter is not described in Kikushima et al.

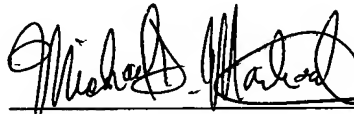
CLOSING

An earnest effort has been made to be fully responsive to the Examiner's objections. In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that independent claims 1 and 4 are in condition for allowance, as well as those claims dependent therefrom. Passage of this case to allowance is earnestly solicited.

However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, he is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper, not fully covered by an enclosed check, may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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